



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/dupont-government-ethiopia-and-usaid-collaborate-improve-maize-production>

DuPont, Government of Ethiopia, and USAID Collaborate to Improve Maize Production



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A group tours the new DuPont Pioneer seed conditioning plant in an industrial suburb of Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. The new plant and warehouse will enable farmers to store seed and to obtain better prices for their maize.

On May 17, U.S.-based science and agribusiness company DuPont joined the Government of Ethiopia and USAID at an event near Addis Ababa to formally launch a New Alliance program that aims to help 35,000 smallholder maize farmers increase productivity by as much as 50 percent and reduce post-harvest loss by as much as 20 percent. As part of the event, DuPont also opened a new, state-of-the-art seed processing plant and warehouse in the Ethiopian town of Menagasha that will improve seed distribution.

Maize is one of Ethiopia's most important cereal crops, but only a fraction of maize farmers use improved hybrid maize seed varieties, which mature faster and generate higher yields. After harvest, maize production in Ethiopia is extremely vulnerable to post-harvest losses due to mold, vermin and theft. As a result, the demand for maize in Ethiopia outpaces the supply despite the fact that over 8 million smallholder farmers grow maize throughout the country.

The three-year partnership between DuPont, the Government of Ethiopia and USAID, [announced earlier this year](#), will work to increase maize productivity by helping more farmers adopt improved seed varieties, reduce post-harvest losses, expand access to credit and inputs, and build the capacity of extension services to disseminate skills and best practices to Ethiopian maize farmers. By training smallholder farmers to use higher-quality inputs and production techniques, the program aims to help them transition from subsistence to self-sustaining farming operations.

As part of the program, DuPont will also facilitate credit for the construction of seed and post-harvest storage facilities like the one opened this month, allowing dealers to store seed until market prices are advantageous, and farmers to benefit from reduced post-harvest loss. The Menagasha facility is the first of its kind in Ethiopia and is designed to offer the highest quality of seed and, eventually, employment opportunities for local workers.

"This program focused on smallholder farmers exemplifies the kind of public-private partnership envisioned in President Obama's Feed the Future Initiative and the G8 New Alliance for Agriculture and Nutrition. It is a model for countries and private sector partners and shows that companies can invest responsibly and grow in the emerging African market," said USAID Ethiopia Mission Director Dennis Weller at the Menagasha plant opening.

DuPont signed a letter of intent under the New Alliance in May 2012 and is among the first international companies to act on

their commitment to invest. Total investment from DuPont will total more than \$2.3 million over the next three years.